

TESTIMONY

Submitted by Kim Durand, Home Health Clinical Manager
Day Kimball Home Care

**Appropriations Public Hearing on the Governor's Proposed FY 24 Budget
Adjustments for Human Services Agencies**

March 1, 2023

Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Lesser, Representative Gilchrist and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee Human Service Subcommittee, my name is Kim Durand, I am Home Health Clinical Manager with Day Kimball Home Care . I am an RN with 35 years' experience, and 30 of those years in Home Health.

Day Kimball Home Care (DKHC) is a small licensed and certified Home Health and Hospice Agency in Putnam. We serve 15 towns in the Quiet Corner; caring for individuals ages 14 to, currently, 103 years of age. We provide cost effective, quality services to North Eastern Connecticut's aging and disabled population.

I'm testifying before you today to ask for additional funding in the State Budget focusing on providing support to Home Health providers, through additional funding for the care and services provided to the Medicaid population. For the providers in the northeastern corner, the burdens of care are greater as there are limited to no community resources as compared to our more urban counterparts. These include areas such as transportation, legal aide, shelters, food pantries and mental and social services. A majority of the Medicaid population served are between the ages of 18 and 65 years of age and has little to no resources or family support. These are complex care adults who do not fall under any protected services class although they are frail and disabled.

I would like to tell you about a woman we cared for from March of 2021 through April of 2022. She was in her fifties, lived in senior housing, and had no family. Her **only** insurance was Medicaid. Her medical problems consisted of unstable diabetes requiring insulin, several cardiac diseases, mobility issues with multiple falls with injuries, and mental health diagnoses. She had significant problems with adhering to the ordered plan of care, due to her inability to understand the complex instructions of multiple medical providers, and significant trust issues as

a result of her mental health diagnosis. She required nursing, physical and occupational therapy, home health aides, and though not covered by Medicaid, social worker services. MSW saw her 6 times in that year, and provided many hours of non-visit work and advocacy. Our patient required high intensity services that were often over the authorization limits, requiring additional authorization for services. This is not a simple task, with added clinical documentation and at times requiring coordination with a Medicaid Nurse Case Manager. Our patient saw several physicians, and at each visit the DKHC clinicians would coordinate the care and medications between these providers. With transportation being limited, and Medicaid Veyo services unreliable, virtual physician visits were scheduled when the nurse was in the home to assist. We utilized the agency's electronic device to complete the visit. Her medication box was prefilled by nursing, and assessed for compliance by each discipline going into the home. She developed legal and financial issues related to her housing, and there was no help for her. Her DKHC care team worked with her until she sustained a fall and injury requiring her to be admitted to a nursing facility.

Day Kimball Home Care strives to support the seniors and disabled individuals, many with multiple chronic illnesses, to remain in their homes. However, with the continued underfunding on Medicaid Covered in Home services I am concerned that our frail elders and adults will not receive the needed services in their homes, where they want to be.

I am asking the Appropriation Committee for Fiscal Budget 2024 to consider the following:

- A fair and consistent increase in Medicaid Rate increase that sustains the cost of care for this population
- A Medicaid Social Worker Rate to assist people with the social, emotional and financial issues which impact their medical and mental health status.

I thank you for your time and dedication to our state.

Respectfully,

Kim Durand RN, MSN

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